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APPLICATION

FOR UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

SPECIFICATION

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

BE IT KNOWN THAT I, **JEAN CHALLENGER**, a citizen of
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have invented a new and useful
FOOD SERVING CONTAINER of which the following is a
specification:

FOOD SERVING CONTAINER

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

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The present invention relates to insulated containers and more particularly pertains to a new food serving container for keeping food articles chilled while being served.

15 Description of the Prior Art

The use of insulated containers is known in the prior art. U.S. Patent No. 4,688,398 describes a device for containing an article that is frozen and maintains the article in a frozen for a period of
20 time. Another type of insulated container is U.S. Patent No. 6,029,457 having a receptacle with an interior shell joined to an exterior shell to allow perishables to be kept at a reduced temperature. U.S. Patent No. 4,981,234 has an inner shell surrounded by an outer shell with a gelatinous compound positioned
25 between the inner shell and the outer shell to keep food items cold.

While these devices fulfill their respective, particular objectives and requirements, the need remains for a device that has certain improved features allowing for the cooling portion to be
30 removed and refrozen.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention meets the needs presented above by an interior bowl member that is separable from an exterior bowl member with a cooling member positioned between the exterior bowl member and the interior bowl portion to cool food articles placed in the interior bowl member.

Still yet another object of the present invention is to provide a new food serving container that maintains the food articles to remain cool and inhibit spoiling of the food articles while the food articles are being served.

Even still another object of the present invention is to provide a new food serving container that reduces the amount of area needed to store when not in use.

To this end, the present invention generally comprises an exterior bowl member being substantially concave. The exterior bowl member is designed for being positioned on a support surface. A cooling member is selectively positioned against an interior surface of the exterior bowl member. The cooling member is designed for being frozen. An interior bowl member is selectively coupled to the exterior bowl member whereby the cooling member is positioned between the interior bowl member and the external bowl member when the cooling member is positioned against the exterior bowl member and the interior bowl member is coupled to the exterior bowl member. The interior bowl member is substantially concave whereby the interior bowl member is designed for receiving the food articles. The cooling member is designed for cooling the food articles in the interior bowl member to inhibit

spoiling of the food articles positioned in the interior bowl member.

There has thus been outlined, rather broadly, the more
5 important features of the invention in order that the detailed
description thereof that follows may be better understood, and in
order that the present contribution to the art may be better
appreciated. There are additional features of the invention that
will be described hereinafter and which will form the subject matter
10 of the claims appended hereto.

The objects of the invention, along with the various features
of novelty which characterize the invention, are pointed out with
particularity in the claims annexed to and forming a part of this
15 disclosure.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be better understood and objects other than
20 those set forth above will become apparent when consideration is
given to the following detailed description thereof. Such
description makes reference to the annexed drawings wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a new food serving container
25 according to the present invention.

Figure 2 is a cross-sectional view of the present invention
taken along line 2-2 of Figure 1.

30 Figure 3 is a top view cooling member of the present
invention.

Figure 4 is a cross-section view of the present invention with the lid member shown positioned for storage.

Figure 5 is a portion of cross-section view of the present invention shown in Figure 2 enlarged for magnification purposes.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

With reference now to the drawings, and in particular to Figures 1 through 5 thereof, a new food serving container embodying the principles and concepts of the present invention and generally designated by the reference numeral 10 will be described.

As best illustrated in Figures 1 through 5, the food serving container 10 generally comprises an exterior bowl member 11 being designed for being positioned on a support surface.

A cooling member 12 is selectively positioned against an interior surface 13 of the exterior bowl member 11. The cooling member 12 is designed for being frozen.

An interior bowl member 14 is selectively coupled to the exterior bowl member 11 whereby the cooling member 12 is positioned between the interior bowl member 14 and the external bowl member when the cooling member 12 is positioned against the exterior bowl member 11 and the interior bowl member 14 is coupled to the exterior bowl member 11. The interior bowl member 14 is substantially concave whereby the interior bowl member 14 is designed for receiving the food articles. The cooling member 12 is designed for cooling the food articles in the interior bowl member

14 to inhibit spoiling of the food articles positioned in the interior bowl member 14.

The exterior bowl member 11 comprises a peripheral wall 15.
5 The peripheral wall 15 defines an interior space 16 of the exterior bowl member 11. The interior space 16 of the exterior bowl is for insulating the cooling member 12 from heat transferring through the peripheral wall 15 of the exterior bowl member 11.

10 The interior space 16 of the exterior bowl member 11 contains an insulating fluid 17. The insulating fluid 17 is for inhibiting thermal transfer through the exterior bowl member 11. The insulating fluid 17 comprises a substantially inert gas, such as nitrogen. The substantially inert gas provides insulation for the
15 cooling member 12 to insulate the cooling member 12 from heat outside of the exterior bowl member 11.

The exterior bowl member 11 comprises a lip member 18 extending inwardly from a top edge 19 of the exterior bowl member
20 11. The interior bowl member 14 comprises an indentation 20 extending into the interior bowl member 14 from a peripheral edge 21 of the interior bowl member 14. The indentation 20 of the interior bowl member 14 selectively receives the lip member 18 of the exterior bowl member 11 to selectively secure the interior bowl
25 member 14 to the exterior bowl member 11.

The cooling member 12 comprises a perimeter wall 22. The perimeter wall 22 defines a plurality of compartments 23 of the cooling member 12. Each of the compartments 23 is for containing
30 a gelatinous compound 24. The gelatinous compound 24 is

designed for being frozen whereby the gelatinous compound 24 is for chilling the food articles positioned in the interior bowl member 14.

5 The compartments 23 of the cooling member 12 comprise a base compartment 25 and a plurality of wall compartments 26. The base compartment 25 is positioned adjacent a base portion of the exterior bowl member 11 when the cooling member 12 is positioned against the exterior bowl member 11. The wall compartments 26 of
10 the cooling member 12 are radially positioned around the base compartment 25 whereby the wall compartments 26 are positioned against a wall portion of the exterior bowl member 11 when the cooling member 12 is positioned against the exterior bowl member 11.

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 A lid member 27 is selectively coupled to the interior bowl member 14. The lid member 27 is positioned opposite the exterior bowl member 11. The lid member 27 is designed for maintaining positioning of the food articles in the interior bowl member 14 to
20 inhibit the food articles from being inadvertently spilled from the interior bowl member 14 when the lid member 27 is coupled to the interior bowl member 14.

 The lid member 27 comprises a hook portion 28 extending
25 downwardly from a perimeter edge 29 of the lid member 27. The hook portion 28 selectively extends over the peripheral edge 21 of the interior bowl member 14 to secure the lid member 27 to the interior bowl member 14 when the lid member 27 is coupled to the interior bowl member 14.

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The lid member 27 comprises a serving aperture 30 extending through the lid member 27. The serving aperture 30 permits access to the interior bowl member 14 whereby the serving aperture 30 is designed for permitting the food articles to be retrieved from the interior bowl member 14 when the lid member 27 is coupled to the interior bowl member 14.

A cover assembly 31 is coupled to the lid member 27. The cover assembly 31 is selectively positioned over the serving aperture 30 of the lid member 27 whereby the cover assembly 31 is designed for selectively limiting access the food articles in the interior bowl member 14 when the cover assembly 31 is positioned over the serving aperture 30 of the lid member 27.

The cover assembly 31 comprises a dome member 32 and a shell member 33. The dome member 32 is coupled to the lid member 27 whereby the dome member 32 is positioned over a portion of the serving aperture 30 of the lid member 27. The shell member 33 is pivotally coupled to the lid member 27 whereby the shell member 33 is for selectively covering the portion of the serving aperture 30 not covered by the dome member 32. The shell member 33 is nested with the dome member 32 to permit access to the serving aperture 30 when the shell member 33 is pivoted with respect to the lid member 27. The dome member 32 of the cover assembly 31 is substantially hemispherical shaped. The shell member 33 of the cover assembly 31 is substantially hemispherical shaped. The shell member 33 comprises a radius less than a radius of the dome member 32 whereby the shell member 33 pivots under the dome member 32 when the shell member 33 is pivoted with respect to the lid member 27.

In use, the user places the cooling member 12 into the freezer and allows the gelatinous compound 24 within the compartments 23 of the cooling member 12 to become cold. The cooling member 12 is then placed in the exterior bowl member 11 and the interior bowl member 14 is coupled to the exterior bowl member 11 to maintain positioning of the cooling member 12. The food articles can then be placed in the interior bowl member 14 to be served and kept cold by the cooling member 12. The lid member 27 is selectively coupled to the interior bowl member 14 to inhibit the food articles positioned in the interior bowl member 14 from being inadvertently spilled. The shell member 33 of the cover assembly 31 can be pivoted to allow access to the serving aperture 30 of the lid member 27 and allow the food articles to be served from the interior bowl member 14. To facilitate storage, the lid member 27 may be flipped upside down to allow the cover member to be positioned in the interior bowl member 14 to take up less space during storage.

With respect to the above description then, it is to be realized that the optimum dimensional relationships for the parts of the invention, to include variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use, are deemed readily apparent and obvious to one skilled in the art, and all equivalent relationships to those illustrated in the drawings and described in the specification are intended to be encompassed by the present invention.

Therefore, the foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction

and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.